

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A server for managing the retail sales of a product across a communication network comprising:

5 retail sales state management means for managing the retail sales state of said product;

price setting means for dynamically setting the price of said product in accordance with rules and the retail sales state of said product and in accordance with the actual retail sales status of said product when managed by  
10 said retail sales state management means; and

product information provision means for, upon the receipt of an information request via said communication network, furnishing a request transmission source with the  
15 information concerning said product and said price of said product, set by said price setting means at the time said information request is received.

2. The server according to claim 1, further comprising:  
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price trend information provision means for generating, in accordance with said actual retail sales state of said product, information concerning trends affecting the changes of said price of said product, and  
25 for furnishing said information to said information request transmission source.

3. The server according to claim 1, wherein said price setting means can set a price for said product by  
30 using rules, based on said retail sales state of said product, according to which the price is increased as the number of product units sold rises or decreased as the number of product units sold falls.

4. A server for managing the retail sales of a product across a communication network comprising:

5 retail sales state management means for managing the retail sales state of said product; and

price setting means for dynamically setting the price of said product in accordance with rules and the retail sales state of said product and in accordance with the actual retail sales status of said product when managed by  
10 said retail sales state management means.

5. A server for charging for and providing digital content via a communication network comprising:

15 sales state management means, for managing the sales state of said digital content;

price setting means, for dynamically changing a charge for accessing said digital content in accordance with rules and the sales state of said digital content and in accordance with said sales state of said digital content,  
20 which is managed by said sales state management means; and

information provision means for presenting to an information request transmission source, upon the receipt of an information request via said communication network, information concerning said digital content and said charge  
25 for accessing said digital content that is set by said price setting means at the time said information request is received.

30 6. The server according to claim 5, further comprising:

price trend information provision means, for generating, in accordance with said sales state of said digital content, information concerning trends affecting

the changing of said charge for accessing said digital content and for furnishing said information to said information request transmission source.

5           7.    The server according to claim 5, wherein said price setting means sets said charge for accessing said digital content in accordance with rules and said sales state of said digital content and according to which said charge for an access is increased when the number of  
10           accesses of said digital content rises or is reduced when the number of accesses falls.

15           8.    The server according to claim 5, wherein said price setting means sets said charge for accessing said digital content in accordance with rules, which is based on said sales state of said digital content, according to which said charge for an access is increased when the rank awarded said digital content, which is consonant with the popularity or the evaluation of said digital content, is  
20           incremented, or said charge for an access is reduced when said rank awarded said digital content is decremented.

25           9.    A server for charging for and providing a digital content via a communication network comprising:

            sales state management means, for managing the sales state of said digital content; and

            price setting means, for dynamically changing a charge for accessing said digital content in accordance with rules and the sales state of said digital content and in  
30           accordance with said actual sales state of said digital content, which is managed by said sales state management means.

10. An information communication terminal, for  
accessing a product retail sales management server across a  
communication network and for purchasing a product offered  
by said server, whereby an information request is issued to  
said server in order to obtain information concerning said  
product and the price of said product;

whereby said information concerning said product and  
said price of said product, and information concerning  
trends affecting the changes of said price are received  
after said server has accepted said information request;  
and

whereby, when a user has examined said information, as  
needed, and has determined to purchase said product, a  
purchase request to that effect is transmitted to said  
server.

11. A product retail sales management method, for  
managing the retail sales of a product in accordance with a  
purchase request that is issued, via a communication  
network, by a server connected thereto, comprising the  
steps of:

managing the retail sales state of said product;

dynamically setting the price of said product in  
accordance with rules and the retail sales state of said  
product and in accordance with the actual retail sales  
status of said product;

furnishing information concerning said product upon  
the receipt of an information request via said  
communication network, and furnishing said price set for  
said product at the time said information request is  
accepted; and

accepting a purchase request for said product that is issued after said information concerning said product and said price of said product have been provided.

5           12. The product retail sales management method according to claim 11, further comprising the steps of:

generating, upon receipt of said information request, information concerning trends affecting the changes of said price of said product in accordance with said retail sales state of said product,

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wherein, at said step of furnishing said information concerning said product and said price of said product, said information concerning said trends affecting the changes of said price of said product is also furnished.

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13. A product retail sales management method, for managing the retail sales of a product in accordance with a purchase request that is issued, via a communication network, by a server connected thereto, comprising the steps of:

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managing the retail sales state of said product;  
dynamically setting the price of said product in accordance with rules and the retail sales state of said product and in accordance with the actual retail sales status of said product; and

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furnishing information concerning said product upon the receipt of an information request via said communication network, and furnishing said price set for said product at the time said information request is accepted.

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14. A storage medium on which input means of a computer stores a computer-readable program that permits said computer to perform:

5 a process for managing the retail sales state of said product;

a process for dynamically setting the price of said product in accordance with rules and the retail sales state of said product and in accordance with the actual retail sales status of said product;

10 a process for furnishing information concerning said product upon the receipt of an information request via said communication network, and furnishing said price set for said product at the time said information request is accepted; and a process for accepting a purchase request  
15 for said product that is issued after said information concerning said product and said price of said product have been provided.

20 15. The storage medium according to claim 14, wherein said program generates, upon receipt of said information request, information concerning trends affecting the changes of said price of said product in accordance with said retail sales state of said product; and

25 wherein, in said process for furnishing said information concerning said product and said price of said product, said program furnishes said information concerning said trends affecting the changes of said price of said product.

30 16. A program transmission apparatus comprising:  
storage means for storing a program that permits a computer to perform

a process for managing the retail sales state of said product,

5 a process for dynamically setting the price of said product in accordance with rules and the retail sales state of said product and in accordance with the actual retail sales status of said product,

10 a process for furnishing information concerning said product upon the receipt of an information request via said communication network, and furnishing said price set for said product at the time said information request is accepted, and

15 a process for accepting a purchase request for said product that is issued after said information concerning said product and said price of said product have been provided; and

transmission means for reading said program from said storage means and for transmitting said program.